



ILLUSTRIOUS NEWS NETWORK



April 22, 2011

62nd Annual British National Science Fiction Convention

Issue 1

Welcome to Illustrious, the 62nd Annual British National Science Fiction Convention.

Have a Beer

The beer and cider wonderland of fun nestles beside the dealers room and carries a selection of delights designed to make you moan with pleasure and dent your purse only a little. So, here's the latest beer and cider update.

Please note: the real ale bar in the fan lounge only accepts cash and groats.

Beer update

This is the current list, but it will change as new casks replace empties. Stay tuned for more updates. Please keep an eye on the descriptions when choosing your beverage, as some of this lovely stuff is rather strong.

Beers

Illustrious/Nemesis Bitter 3.8%
Bright 3.8% (Review—'A nice light beer although my partner said it smelled of hair dye')
Peakstones Chained Oak 4.2%
Abbey 4.5%
Blonde 4.5% (Review —'V.G.')

Black Hole 4.8%
Shipwreck 6.5%
Titanic Iceberg Bitter 4.1% (Review—'Reliable')
Springtime Rendezvous 4.2%

Ciders

Wilcox Traditional 6.5%
Citrus Minor Medium Sweet 5.0%
Broad Oak Premium Perry 7.5% (Review—'Mellow')
G. Watkin Farmhouse Perry 7.0%
Newtons Draught Perry 6.5%

Transatlantic fan fund voting

The voting deadline for the transatlantic fan fund (TAFF) 2011 race has been extended to midnight (GMT) on the 26th of April, so you can still vote your socks off this Eastercon. TAFF provides funds to 'bring fans who are well known and popular on both sides fandoms across the ocean'. This year's candidates are: Liam Proven, John Coxon, Graham Charnock and Paul Treadaway. You can cast your vote at the Cold Tonnage table in the dealers room.



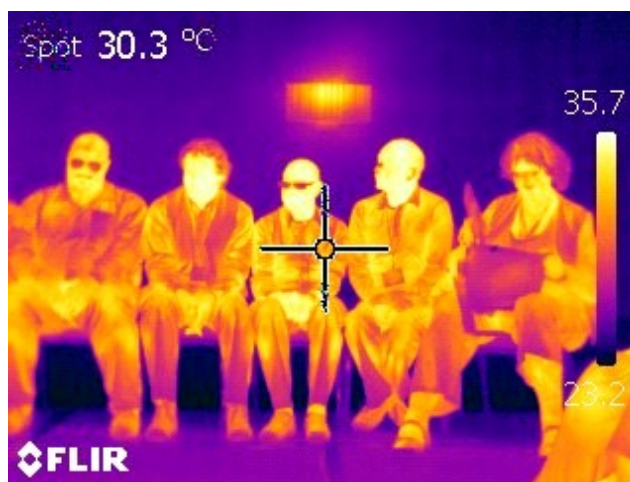
Photo credit: Jan van't Ent

Sarah Jane Smith tribute

Following the sad news of the death of Elisabeth Sladen, the BBC have announced a tribute programme. *My Sarah Jane: A Tribute to Elisabeth Sladen* is to be broadcast at 6.45pm on Saturday 23rd April, immediately after the first episode of the new season of *Doctor Who*.

Doctor Who followed by Elisabeth Sladen tribute, Queens room, 6pm Saturday. Please be seated by 5.50pm.

The opening ceremony as you've never seen it before



Dave Clements has kindly photographed our Illustrious guests of honour with his infrared camera, we think you'll all agree that they're hot stuff.

For more of this sort of shenanigans, pop along to the George Hay Lecture at 3pm on Saturday in the Queens room.

Little Owl review

The Little Owl pub is next to the Holiday Inn Express, about a 12 minute walk from the con hotel (there's a map on their website at: www.vintageinns.co.uk/thelittleowlsollihulnec). They serve pub food and real ale, with seating both inside and outside. You can feed two people for about £18, the food is nice and the service is good.

Programme Changes

Duration change: Dr Who showing on the BBC

This item will last for slightly longer than originally advertised, as we will also be showing the Elisabeth Sladen tribute.

Description change: Tai Chi

Fiona Anderson's Tai Chi session on Monday morning (9am, Gladstone room) will be on **self defence for beginners**.

NEC opening times

For those taking shortcuts through the NEC, please note that the building closes at 11pm unless there is an event on.

Millers review

Looking for food and somewhat unwilling to go out and take a train to city centre, a group of us dropped in at Millers restaurant, which actually offers a nice choice of not unreasonably-priced meals; we ate there for about £30 each, including drinks. The spaghetti was nice and filling, the burger and chicken fillet came with fries and salad, the chicken curry smelled wonderful, and the house wine was quite good. You may have to watch it, as some interesting appetizers were more expensive than some main courses, but there is a choice.

Food and tights at the NEC

Upon first inspection the exterior of the hotel looks as if there's nothing but car parks as far as the eye can see. This is all very well if what you want to do is park a car, but maybe you want to find food or a pair of tights. For such esoteric needs, wants and desires you may wish to do a reverse somersault with backflip and find yourself at the rear of the hotel heading toward the NEC. Strange and wondrous paths take you to far distant places in the NEC such as the Piazza. The chains are strong here and will provide sustenance, alcohol and even legwear for the connoisseur. Weatherspoons Piazza is my special recommendation, but I cannot guarantee its availability. I questioned the bar person closely and she said it would be open on Friday and Saturday, 2pm to 8pm (serving food till 7pm), but closed on Sunday and Monday. The beers there are Abbot, Pedigree and John Smith, and the food is the usual Wetherspoon fare. Several delicacies caught my eye such as sausage and mash for £7.95 and Moroccan meatballs with couscous. There were a couple of vegetarian dishes, including one that even tempted a devout carnivore such as myself; sweet potato, chick pea and spinach curry. This comes with rice, naan bread, mango chutney and poppadums. Apparently you can drop the naan for extra poppadums to make it gluten free too. I managed to resist these delights and feasted upon jacket potato, chilli, sour cream and salad. It was a snack full of yum, and all for £4.70. The icing on the cake for me was the little gadget they gave us to let us know when our food was available. It flashed and vibrated and we went to the food counter to collect our potatoes. Ain't technology wunnerful.

Unfortunately there was a lack of tights for sale here, so we wandered on another 20 yards and found a small newsagent of the type which sells all types of everything at less than extortionate prices. There tights were purchased and the lady told us fabulous tales of possible opening hours. Friday it will be open 8.30am until 5pm. Saturday 8.30am until about lunchtime, Sunday 8.30am 'til about lunchtime and Monday 8.30am until ... Monday was all a bit dark and

mysterious, so she wouldn't commit to what they would get up to on Monday. Still, it's a fine resource and only about 5 minutes walk away from the hotel. This combined with the NatWest cash dispenser also in the piazza makes this area a potentially valuable resource for Illustrious conventioners.

Hilton car parking

Illustrious has arranged a reduced car parking rate of £3 per day for both residents and non-residents of the Hilton during the convention.

To get this reduced rate, take your car park entry ticket to reception, where you will be charged £3 and given a new ticket to exit the car park.

Bear necessities

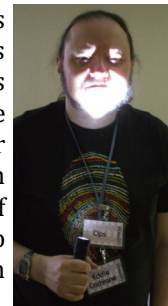
At the beebled bears picnic (Sunday, 1.30pm, Gladstone room), ZZ9 will be running a best-dressed beebled bear competition. This is an excellent opportunity to indulge your creative side and bring out your bear's inner supermodel.

There are two categories: premeditated (for those who would like to create their costume in advance) and chaos (for those who would like to create a costume out of whatever comes to hand during the picnic).

Any froods under 12 must be accompanied by a guardian. Any guardians must be significantly over 12!

Ops in the dark

At approximately 2pm today, the lights in Ops mysteriously dimmed. It seems that one of the fuse panels was misbehaving, doing a creditable impression of a stricken starship. Fear not, for the occupants of the room sprang forth with a startling array of torches, allowing hardy volunteers to sign up for Ops shifts in an unexpectedly romantic setting.



Thanks Chris

Thank you to Chris O'Shea, who suggested the name for this year's newsletter.

Get a Life

There's a world outside the convention—walk around in bright sunshine and admire the Who-like world of brown fortress, white cranes, red blocks—especially early in the morning it's remarkably desolate, so not for the faint of heart. Excursions around the lake only to be undertaken with a learned guide.



Photo credit: Jan van't Ent

News items in this issue were provided by: Jim Mowatt, Jan van't Ent, Danie Ware, Ross Younger, Steve Green, Lydia English, Eddie Cochrane, Popplestone and Fiona Anderson.



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Issue 2

Newsletter submissions

Items for the Newsletter can be submitted at the Newsletter Office (a.k.a. the Norfolk Room). When the office is closed (and when it's open), items can be put in the Newsletter box in Ops. We also welcome e-mail submissions at: newsletter@illustrious.org.uk. Go on, you know you want to!

Sarah Jane Smith memorial issue

After the sad news of Elisabeth Sladen's death, we have decided to dedicate a special issue of the Newsletter to her memory. We would love to have articles from many different people writing about her life and what she meant to them. Please bring contributions to the Newsletter office, to Ops, or e-mail them to: newsletter@illustrious.org.uk.

Green room

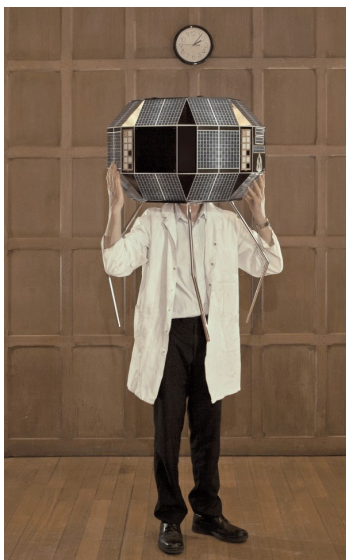
Please can programme participants come to the Green Room 15—20 minutes before their item is due to start. This gives us a chance to make sure everyone's here and buy you a drink. Green Room (a.k.a. Surrey), is at the Fan Lounge / Dealer's Room end of the hotel.

Participant information

Unfortunately some people didn't get programme participant letters on registration. If you think you should have got one, please come to Programme Ops, which is based in the Green Room (a.k.a. Surrey), and collect it.

Simon Morden signing at the Forbidden Planet table

Simon Morden will be signing at the Forbidden Planet trading table at 2pm on Sunday afternoon. He'll be signing the new Metrozone novel, *Theories of Flight*, which is technically not actually available until the 28th!



Have you seen this satellite?

There is a very nice chap roaming around in the Fan Lounge asking if people would like to be photographed wearing his satellite (honest!). This is a model of Prospero, the only British satellite ever launched from a British rocket. If you'd like to put a satellite on your head, pop along to the Fan Lounge and look for Docubyte!

Little Owl update

Following our review of the Little Owl pub several people (including a large proportion of the Newsletter team) ventured over there in search of food. Although the pub looks lovely, their kitchen has suffered some sort of misfortune and is currently out of action. They hope to be back up and running either today (Saturday) or tomorrow. If you're thinking of venturing over there, we'd advise you to phone first to check on the food situation. Their number is: 0121 781 0331.

Programme Changes

New item: Signing Session

An extra signing session has been arranged for 12 noon on Saturday in the Fan Lounge.

The confirmed attendees at the time of writing are Susan Bartholomew, Toby Frost, Jane Killick, Juliet E. McKenna, Ian R. McLeod, Marion Pitman, Lucsan and Andy Bigwood, but more could be added to the roster before the signing so head along and check it out!

New item: Roz Kaveney Interview

Roz Kaveney, Illustrious poet laureate and guest of honour, will be interviewed by Kari Sperring at 12 noon on Saturday in the London room.

Panellist change: Is SF winning the culture wars?

Roz Kaveney will no longer be a panellist for this item.

Room change: Signing Sessions (Sunday & Monday)

These signing sessions have been moved to the Fan Lounge.

Time change: Animé Quiz

This item had been moved to 1.30pm (still in the London room on Saturday).

Duration change: Dr Who showing on the BBC

This item will last for slightly longer than originally advertised, as we will also be showing the Elisabeth Sladen tribute.

Cancellation: Read This Novel!

Originally scheduled for 7.30pm on Saturday, this item has now been **cancelled**.

Time change: Martial Arts in Space

John Meaney and Juliet McKenna, two black-belt authors, will be giving a full-on martial arts demo, strutting their stuff in white pyjamas. There will be screaming, but not from the audience.

This item has moved to 7.30pm (still in the Wellington room on Saturday).

Fundraising book launch at Illustrious

Last year, Roz Kaveney wrote a sequence of fourteen sonnets to honour the memory of her friend, 1993 TAFF delegate Abigail Frost.

Roz will be performing these poems for the first time at Eastercon (3pm Saturday in the London room), and also selling a limited-edition 14 page chapbook containing all fourteen sonnets (trade format, colour cover) for a donation to TAFF of at least £6.00.

World's worst superhero competition

This competition is for fans aged 15 years and under. The challenge is to invent the most utterly useless, pathetically hopeless or totally pointless superhero the world has ever seen. The contenders should briefly describe their creation in the judging session 3pm Monday in the Wellington room—extra merit will be awarded to entries illustrated with drawings.

Quiz team members wanted

Are you looking for a chance to embarrass yourselves in front of hundreds of fen? Then become a team member for *Never Mind the Buzz Aldrins*, the Satellite 3 SF Music Quiz in the Churchill room at 4.30pm on Sunday. We're looking for 3 teams of 4 people, so bring a friend as well. Don't worry if you're too late to sign up—audience participation is encouraged too! Note: this is a re-run of the quiz from Redemption'11. So if you were there, you cannot be in a team (this means you, Gasped!).

If music quizzes aren't your cup of tea, then why not try the Satellite 3 *Choccy Biccie Quiz* in the London room at 7.30pm on Saturday. Pit your wits and your taste buds against your fellow fans to show who has stolen the most biscuits from the biscuit barrel. Sign-up sheets for both quizzes are in Ops.

Kaffeeklatsches

Come one, come all, to a kaffeeklatsch of wonder and delight. Spaces are limited so you'll have to go along to ops and fill out forms of such horror and monstrosity that they'll make your ears curl [are you exaggerating again Jim?—Ed]. The first of this weekend's kaffeeklatsches will be with artist David Hardy (Saturday at 12 noon), a splendid resource for all you artist types to dip into. Roz Kaveney is the one to speak to on Saturday at 4.30pm. Roz is our con poet, so may have some words for your ears. If Roz has words for any other parts of your body then we'd be intrigued to hear what they get up to. On Sunday at 12 noon then it's Peter F Hamilton. Peter needs no introduction so he's not getting one, and the last one of these events will take place on Monday at 1.30pm with David Weber. These will be delightfully intimate events so make sure you toddle along to Ops to sign up for them.

Calling Ms E H Coates

Please could Ms E H Coates return to the Victorian Steampunk Society stand in the dealers room regarding yesterday's purchase.

Con food

The locations and times for con food are:

Fan lounge (next to the dealers' room)

Room open from 10am for relaxation and lounging

Beer served from 11.00am to 3.00am

Late night food served from 11.00pm to midnight

Pavilion (next to the swimming pool)

Lunch served from 11.30am to 2pm

Dinner served from 5.30pm to 8.30pm

Courtesy bus

If you need to go to Birmingham International station, there is a courtesy bus that runs from the hotel. However, it's only a minibus so book your place to the concierge to guarantee a place! Once you are at the station, a free yellow telephone is situated next to Subway in order for you to book your return trip.

TWP party

The TWP tea party is in room 1007 between 4.30pm and 6.30pm today (Saturday). All past, present and prospective members of the women-only APA are welcome to attend.

Dire warning, don't go to lobby B

It is a dark place that leads to the corridors of small numbers. The only way back is the way you have come, and the hotel stations someone there so they can witness you emerging lost, dejected and miserable back into the space you left only a few moments ago.

Can you handle your microphone?

Well, stop handling that microphone right now. It makes a bad noise. The tech crew program item dedicated to improving the technique of panellists with their microphones has been and gone, but they're happy to arrange quick technique refreshers. Please feel free to pop along to tech crew in between program items and they'll be happy to advise you on how to make the best use of your microphone. You'll be surprised just how big a difference this can make to the audio.

Hall costume day

Today is Hall Costume Day! You were issued with some tokens at registration, so keep an eye out for your favourite weird and wonderful creations and show your appreciation by giving their wearer a token. The winner will be announced at the Closing Ceremony.

Overheard at the con

'I brought all the heads, just in case.'

'Who is Kate Middleton getting married to?'

During the opening ceremony:

"I'm going to stay here
and wait for the great women."

Groats

When purchasing things from the hotel using groats please plan your payment carefully, as no change will be given from groats.

News items in this issue were provided by: Jim Mowatt, Danie Ware, Poppleton, the tech crew, Crazy Dave, Fran Dowd, Steve Green, Michael, James Ball (Docubyte).



ILLUSTRIOUS NEWS NETWORK



April 23, 2011

62nd Annual British National Science Fiction Convention

Issue 3

A beard for Lent

The lovely Paul Cornell has given up shaving for lent: you might have seen him wandering around the convention looking seedy.

He's trying to raise as much money as possible for Shelter, and asks that everyone visit:

<http://www.justgiving.com/Paul-Cornell0>

to donate. You can also give money at the Fan Fund Auction this evening, or just thrust large denomination bank notes into his hands.

The Gamma Award

In the programme book at 9.00pm on Saturday night you'll see a rather brief item that goes under the name Gamma Award. There's no description as it's a very recent entry into the Eastercon programme and details were lacking. We've now received a press release in the Eastercon newsroom and can tell you a little more. This award is to commemorate the life of Paul Gamble, 'the ultimate Frank Zappa fan, science fiction bookseller, fantastic film fan and genre fiction champion'. He was 'a monumental drinker and partaker of life's pleasures' and died from kidney failure on November 15th 2010. Neil Gaiman said of him; 'Gamma was one of the most memorable, individual, even extreme, people I've ever known. He could be loud, embarrassing, over the top and semi-deranged at times, but it was still, and always, a privilege to know him. He was a man who never stopped believing in the power of the Unlimited Dream; how can you not admire, how can you not love, a man like that?'

In order to commemorate the life of Paul Gamble a group of friends and 'Daves' have initiated "The DnA (Daves 'n' Anarchy) Award" is to be presented to the outstanding piece of speculative work in any media or genre of the previous calendar year anywhere in the world. To be considered the work must be innovative,

speculative and provocative. The DnA is a 26cm high double helix with a clear Perspex base. A fascinating looking creation.

A company called the Daves Dream Company Limited has been formed in order to raise prize funds and to administer the award.



Fan Fund Auction

The League of Fan Funds will be running the traditional auction in aid of the Fan Funds on Saturday evening from 8.30pm in the Salisbury room. As well as the usual selection of books, chocolate, convention merchandise and interesting things in bottles, we have a fabulous star item for sale: Charles Stross has very kindly donated a Sony eBook Reader, pre-loaded with his entire back-catalogue, to the auction! Come along, and bid early and often!

Easter Sunday service

All are welcome to come along. We're planning something a bit more Low-Church than last year. The Service will be at 9.00am on Sunday in the London room.

Oh burger!

Further to the horrific burger shortage experienced by congoers yesterday, there are apparently now more burgers available to purchase and eat. We hope that this fulfils all your burger-related needs.

Your future in the cards

"Gypsy Rose" Liz Williams will be reading Tarot all weekend in the dealers' room. Cross her palm with silver and she will introduce you to a tall dark stranger...

Lost items

Swimsuit

A swimsuit was accidentally left in the ladies' changing room at around 8.00am this morning, and has mysteriously disappeared.

Watch

A watch with a black, leather-look strap has been lost somewhere in the Hilton.

If you happen upon either of the offending items, please hand them in to Ops (Lancaster room).

Tai Chi

It is worth noting that the Tai Chi items being run this weekend are not open to under-18s. This is due to the instructor's insurance not covering that age range. Apologies to anyone who fits this description and wanted to have a go!

Programme Changes

Time and room change: The Satellite 3 Choccy Biccie Quiz

This item will now be run at 7.30pm on Saturday in the London room.

David Weber interview

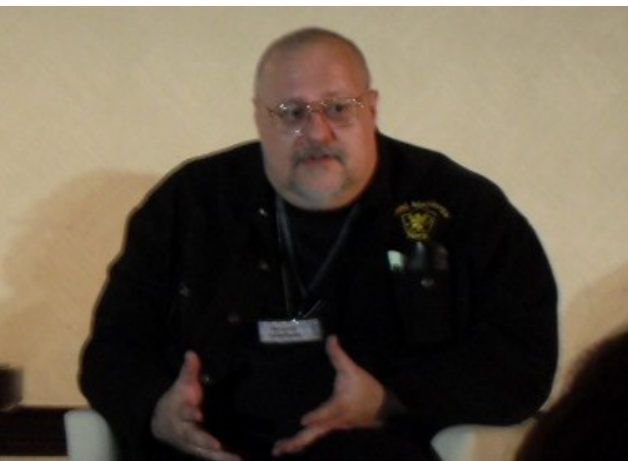
David started by giving us a quick rundown of all the series/novels that he's currently working on, before interviewer Gary Stratmann could ask what else he did in his life. Well, walk back from the office to hear the kids ask who this strange man was, of course.

Getting into the interview, major points were on how all the various collaborations worked. This mostly depends on who the collaborator is, and also when it started. One involved swapping versions of the stories by mail, which would be impractical now; nowadays modern technology like e-mail and skype takes over of course. Some problems with collaborating are differences in style and speed; style is resolved by planning in advance who takes care of what parts, which characters or even scenery, and have the 'owner' veto the results. It can be more difficult to resolve differences in writing speed, that can result in waiting a lot if you're the faster writer, and are unwilling to get involved in another story instead of working on one project at a time, like David does.

Other questions related to the planning of his series. Most proved to have not so much a detailed production line of what would happen in which novel, or even how many novels it would take to get to the end, but David really has an endpoint in mind to work towards. Of course, sometimes things will be adjusted later on, as events evolve, or even when collaborators unwittingly move forward certain planned events. But even for a series that started more or less open-ended, in due course a more definite plan develops.

A question from the audience on how difficult it is to keep track of all the physical details relating to space battles and such, got the easy answer of 'I cheat'. Or in fact, these often get worked out backwards, starting with the desired resulting events and then working out how to get there from the starting situation. Although as an aside David mentioned the timelines he worked with are getting quite a bit more detailed nowadays, *e.g.* crosslinking a courier boat's take-off point, route and arrival time to other events.

There was loads more, on how the Peeps weren't the Peeps to begin with (go check your *On Basilisk Station* to see only three 'People's Republic of Haven' mentions could be fitted into the final proof stage,



where other mentions had to stay simply to the 'Republic' to avoid a complete re-typesetting), or how the Solarian League isn't so much relating to a historical empire as well as your typical empire attitude as seen throughout history.

Olympus 2012 progress reports

If you requested a physical paper PR for the next Eastercon, Olympus in 2012, you can collect it from the appropriate desk, right next to the entrance to the fan lounge. Get them whilst they're hot!

Peter F. Hamilton signing at the Forbidden Planet table

News has reached us that Peter F. Hamilton, author and Guest of Honour, will be doing a signing at the Forbidden Planet table in the dealers' room. We are told that this will begin after his interview on Sunday morning, so at about 11.30am. If you have any questions or queries about this, please feel free to ask at the Forbidden Planet table.

Queens bar

Please note that there will not be a bar in the Queens room tonight (Saturday) or tomorrow night.

Eastercon podcast

Jim Mowatt is producing a series of independent podcasts about *Illustrious* this year, these can be found at: <http://jimowatt.blogspot.com/2011/04/eastercon-2011.html>

Mirror Universes panel

In a mirror universe there might be pink fluffy Daleks that want to make people happy. Apparently they would shout 'Exhilarate!'

In a mirror universe it was the Clangers who destroyed the Space 1999 colony.

Quick response codes

There was a mention by this writer in *Illustrious* progress report 3 (*Media SF through the ages*) about the increasing use of quick response (QR) codes. These are those small squares you see in adverts and which—when scanned by one's i-tablet phone app—convey a lot of info and data.

I'm told they are an advanced form of the old linear barcodes but of course these are in two dimensions, not one. Well, they have started to appear on Con notices/posters/fliers.

And the first one noticed here at *Illustrious* is that for Octocon 2011 (the annual Irish NatCon, GoH: John Higgins). Well done. We now look forward to the first 3D Poster (with or without glasses)! BCNU.



News items in this issue were provided by: Richard Crawshaw, Jim Mowatt, Flick, John Coxon, Gaspode, Forbidden Planet, Dave Lally, Fran Dowd, David Haddock and Jan van't Ent.



ILLUSTRIOUS NEWS NETWORK



April 24, 2011

62nd Annual British National Science Fiction Convention

Issue 4

Signing session 2 author list

There are a large number of very fine authors who will be available, ready and willing to do some signing of stuff on Sunday at 3.00pm in the Fan Lounge. Waiting there with pen poised in hand (or similar limb-like object) will be: Marion Pitman, Jane Killick, Juliet E McKenna, Lauren Beukes, Mike Shevdon, Philip Palme, Simon Morden, Stan Nicholls, Charlie Stross, Jaine Fenn, Lucsan, Christopher Priest, Jonny Nexus, Kari Sperring, Mike Cobby, Paul Cornell, Rod Rees, Sophia McDougall, Suzanne McLeod, Stephen Deas, Liz Williams, and Susan Bartholomew.

Kaffeeklatsch update

In our last issue we encouraged you to nip along to Ops to sign up for the Kaffeeklatsch sessions with the guests of honour. There was a splendid response and the David Weber Kaffeeklatsch on Monday is now full. There are still spaces for Kaffeeklatsches with David Hardy, Roz Kaveney, but not for Peter F Hamilton.

Overheard in the bar

As exclaimed by an avid reader of issue 3 of the Newsletter: 'A beard is not just for Lent, it's for life.'

Lost item

Beard

Prominent science fiction author Paul Cornell appears to have lost his beard. If you find it, please hand it in to Ops (Lancaster room).

Alternatively, you may wish to console Paul by making a donation to Shelter via his justgiving webpage:

<http://www.justgiving.com/Paul-Cornell0>



BSFA award winners

It's always fascinating to see who will carry off the British Science Fiction Association awards, and this year has produced yet another fine bunch of winners.

This year's conquering heroes are:

Best Novel *Dervish Nights*, Ian McDonald

Best Short Fiction *The Shipmaker*, Aliette de Bodard

Best Non-Fiction *Blogging the Hugos: Decline*, Paul Kincaid (collected by Kev McVeigh)

Best Artwork cover of *Zoo City*, Joey Hi-Fi (collected by Lauren Beukes)

From left to right: Kev, Lauren, Aliette and Ian



Animé quiz prize

Please could David (badge number 977) visit Ops (in the Lancaster room) to collect his animé quiz prize.

Pens found

Two Japanese ink pens (cool grey C2 and C5) have been found in the Fan Bar. If these belong to you, please visit Ops to collect them.

Eastercon 2013 bid?

The Eastercon bid session is due to begin at 12 noon in the Dukes room today. At the time of writing there are no known bids for the 2013 Eastercon. It'll be interesting to see what happens in the absence of a bid. Will there be a 2013 Eastercon? If anyone has any whisperings of possible convention salvage then please alert the newsletter.

Overheard in the dealers' room

'I always carry a bottle of Rioja and a *Fortean Times* as an emergency measure.'

Programme Changes

Room change: Eastercon Bid Session

This item has been moved to the Salisbury room.

Room change: Satellite 3 Presents: An Introduction to Jetan

This item has moved to the Dukes room.

Room change: Play Rehearsal 3

This item has moved to the Churchill room.

The return of *New Worlds* magazine

In September/October this year Michael Moorcock's *New Worlds Magazine* will be making a comeback under the auspices of the directors of the Daves Dream Company. These are the same people mentioned in issue 3, who are creating the DnA (Daves 'n' Anarchy) Award, and this is another part of their wish to create a legacy and memorial in tribute to Paul Gamble. They've managed to obtain permission from Michael Moorcock to use the name, and he will also contribute editorial pieces to the magazine. The website:

www.newworlds.co.uk

will be going live for July, but until that time any potential contributors should contact:

hodson798@btinternet.com

David Weber interview review

The David Weber interview at 1:30pm was a great success. The author started by giving the assembled masses a brief overview of what he's currently working on, which included obligations to deliver four more novels by the end of the year, the forthcoming Young Adult book to be set in the Honorverse and news on negotiations to turn the Honor Harrington books into a film.

The interview itself was comprised of two parts—questions from the audience and questions from the interviewer—and both yielded some very interesting insights into the books and the writing process! Although David did get side-tracked on occasion (into fantastic discussions of timelines and computers and politics and taxation) he always made sure he'd answered the audience's questions to their satisfaction. My personal favourite was learning how the battles between spaceships are constructed to give a physically accurate blow-by-blow account that leads to the desired outcome (the answer, it would seem, is to work backwards). All in all, an hour well spent!

Dalek article

In the Irish *Metro Herald* (19th April 2011), an article appeared entitled 'We fear most becoming like the Doctor Who Daleks'. In the article, Dr Robin Bunce sets out his hypothesis that the reason the Daleks are scary is because they are a constant reminder of how awful our future might be. Apparently, we fear them 'because we recognise that they were once better'.

If you feel that you might be turning into a Dalek, please alert the nearest committee member so that we can cordon you off and evacuate the hotel.

Subway open

Our roving reporters have unearthed another potential source of food. It's the sandwich shop *Subway* in the NEC railway station, which will be open and serving food all day today (Sunday) from 7.00am to 8.00pm, and from 7.00am to 10.00pm on Monday.

TransAtlantic Fan Fund voting still open

This year's TAFF race is entering its final weekend at this convention. If you would like to vote for a candidate, please go along to the Cold Tonnage table in the dealers' room! The candidates are John Coxon (that's me!), Liam Proven, Paul Treadaway and Graham Charnock, and the race will take the winner to Renovation, the 2011 Worldcon. In order to vote, there is a required minimum donation of £2/\$3.

Milford writers meeting

Alumni of the Milford Writers Workshops are having a gathering in the bar opposite hotel reception at 3pm on Sunday. Past attendees welcome.

The best deal from London 2014

The London in 2014 Worldcon Bid are awaiting your support in the dealers' room, in the form of cash, cheque or credit card.

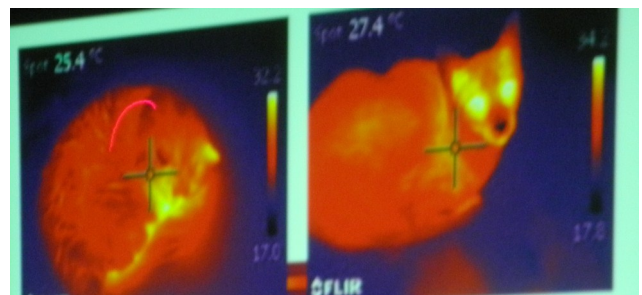
You can just get a Pre-Support for £12, which helps support the bid and which will give you a £6 discount on getting a membership once they win the bid.

But you can also become Friend of the bid. This will cost you £60, but will be counted in full against getting a membership and is guaranteed to be the cheapest way to join the Worldcon.

London in 2014 has close to 1,000 supporters already, 500 from the UK. But there are still 600 people here who have not yet joined the club. You know you'll be there, and L14 want every UK fan to be a supporter and take advantage of this great Friend offer. So pop along to the table and join the club as a Friend or PS.

George Hay lecture recorded

The Science Fiction Foundation would like to advise people who didn't manage to attend the George Hay lecture that it has been recorded as video, and will be available via the Science Fiction Foundation website (www.sf-foundation.org) as soon as is practicable.



The lecture provided incontrovertible experimental evidence that long-haired cats (left) are hotter than short-haired cats (right).



News items in this issue were provided by: Katherine & Albert Pritchard, Steve Cooper, John Coxon, Caroline, Sarah Haddock, David Haddock, Jim Mowatt, Zoe, and Carrie.



ILLUSTRIOUS NEWS NETWORK



April 24, 2011

62nd Annual British National Science Fiction Convention

Issue 5

Beer update

This is the list of alcoholic beverages available in the Fan Bar (as of Saturday morning).

Beers

Blonde 4.5% (3 kegs left)

Vale Pale Ale 4.2% (1 keg)

Something for the Weekend 4.6% (1 keg)

Vale Copper Brown 4.5% (1 keg)

Hairy Helmet 4.7% (1 keg)

Best Bitter 4.2% (1 keg)

Abbey 4.5% (4 kegs)

Scoundrel 4.1% (was not tapped yet, waiting for a tap to become available, 1 keg) **Update: now tapped**

Chained Oak 4.2% (2 kegs)

Illustrious 3.8% (7 kegs)

Wychert Ale 3.9% (1 keg)

Ciders

Rioja Cask Cider 6.7% (1 left)

Farmhouse 6% (2 left)

Moonshine 7.2% (2 left)

Perry

Olivers 6.5% (2 left)

Apple and Pear 6% (1 left)

Black Rat (1 left)

There were also some other ciders and perry out the back that will be brought through as soon as there's space (Fox Whelp, Devon Scrumpy, Thatchers, Newtons, Cheddar Valley, Janet's Jungle Juice).

Corrections

Apologies to Ian McDonald: the title of Ian's BSFA award winning novel is, in fact, *The Dervish House*.

Apologies to science: as eagle-eyed readers of issue 4 will already have spotted, the assertions about the temperatures of cats were a load of old nonsense. The long-haired cat on the left of the picture was clearly cooler than the short-haired cat on the right, as indicated by the temperatures in the top-left corners of the images. This demonstrates the long-haired cats are, in fact, better insulated than short-haired cats!

Restaurant recommendations

Henley in Arden is about 20 minutes South of the M42 (junction 4) and has some excellent eateries. The Swan (gastropub, £30 for 2 people: 2 main courses + 1 pudding + coffee + drinks) and The Thai Cottage (restaurant, £48 for 2 people: 2 courses + drinks + a dessert) have now been road tested, and are reasonably priced in comparison to the locality.

Youngest fan spotted!

Most of us know of the on-going debate about the 'greying' of us mainstream fans (*i.e.* those not in Animé, or in Discworld, who seem to have a younger demographic) and what can be done about it. Well it is heartening to see amongst us 'elders', an element this weekend which counterbalances the trend.

Joining his 3 year old brother (and the rest of his family) at Illustrious—and causing much interest especially amongst female fen—is babe in arms (born 28th March) Frederick (badge name Gerbil).

To this writer's knowledge, this is the youngest fan ever to attend an Eastercon. One wonders what his world (and indeed Eastercon 123?) will be like when he reaches the age of this writer (61) in 2072??

Fan Fund Auction

We'd like to thank everyone who came along to the Fan Fund auction last night.

We raised £125 from sales of Roz Kaveney's *The Abigail Sonnets* (in aid of TAFF), £120 from donations for Paul Cornell's Beard for Lent (in aid of Shelter) and £560 from other auction items (in aid of the League of Fan Funds). Many thanks to everyone who gave time, money, help and items for auction.

The Future's Bright...!

Attention all members of Satellite 3—It's new, it's orange, and it's here. Yes, we have just issued progress report 1. You can now collect your own shiny copy at the satellite 3 desk. Please come and save us some postage!

New members who join Satellite 3 this weekend will also receive their very own copy of PR1.

Get it on your chest!

Have you been admiring the lovely Satellite 3 posters and gazing jealously at the chests of fen proudly wearing their fine piece of Psychochicken artwork? Drool no longer, you too can possess a piece of clothing to make your friends green with envy. Just come along to the Satellite 3 table and sign up for a T-shirt. These cost a piffling £16 earth pounds, with £4 for postage in the UK.

Programme Changes

Panelist change: Fugitives in SF

Rochita Loenen-Ruiz replaces Lauren Beukes.

Panelist change: Gender & Race in SF and Pop Culture

Aliette de Bodard replaces Lauren Beukes.

Firefly LARP

The *Firefly* themed live action role-play (LARP), a brief introduction. The crews of 6 spaceships have gathered in Rick's bar to drink and deal, or just unwind with their peers and the port's more shady ground crew. The players have each been assigned a character with a unique history, secrets, friends, enemies, and maybe one or two clues.... That and a brief description of the rules along with a badge and maybe a little in-game cash.

The badge is for players to recognize other people taking part, as they could encounter them between the formal game time slots whilst carrying out their tasks. Requests *etc.* can be posted between sessions in the games post box in the Arden room.

There are rumours that exceptional bravery was shown in recovering a captured pilot, and there has been a fantastically unsuccessful assassination attempt, where the assassin downed multiple victims but failed to secure any fatalities.

Last night the con chair took 3 heavy blaster hits to the chest from an Alliance marshall while enforcing a no weapons policy in her own bar.

LARP update

Following the con chair being shot 3 times in the chest last night with heavy weaponry, her evil twin sister has taken over as con chair and Rick's bar has been taken over by Cally's sister Zelda, who really really hates the Alliance now.

Cross words

The answer to 7 across, 1 down, in the *Independent* crossword for Saturday 23rd of April was 'captain James T Kirk' it seems and, as I'm sure everyone knows, that's an anagram of 'Jamaican skirt kept.'

Independent Chaps

In this hotel you will often find a newspaper lying around wanting to be your complimentary paper of choice. This is the *Independent* and its provided us in the newsroom with a fair amount of entertainment. Today there is an article about chaps (page 26), which chimes nicely with current fashions in fandom. It's delightful to see so many elegant ladies and gentleman floating around the corridors wearing their mutant Victorian and Edwardian attire. The wider world is also looking back to more formal and stylish clothing and we see the rise of the chap who lives by the motto, 'Thou Shalt Always Wear Tweed.' The article is publicising a book coming out next month called *Am I a Chap?*

Hello from Australia

Sue Ann Barber writes to us from the exotic land of Australia (also known as the land of the upside down) to say hello from Natcon in Perth, so we thought we'd take this opportunity to say hello back!

Hello from Australia

Hotel pool review

I would heartily recommend a visit to the hotel pool. Just give them your hotel room number or convention number and name and they'll give you a towel in return. You'll need a pound for the locker in the changing room but then you're onwards to the pool and can start swimming. There's a middle lane for swimming up and down and the two sides of the pool are for more general mucking around. There's a jacuzzi, a sauna, and some weird fountain things. I was a little baffled by these but they looked fun so I went over for a play with them. They fire out at you with quite a degree of force, and through questioning the people around me I discovered that they are a massage thing. I'm not sure how relaxing it was, but I reckon it was pretty enjoyable. I emerged from the pool feeling bright, refreshed, and ready to return to the con.

Eastercon bid session report

The first discussions at the bid session for the 2013 Eastercon concerned the Eastercon brand and trademark rather than the announcement of any bids. The Eastercon trademark is to be renewed in 2013 for ten years, and although this will cost money, it is being sorted out by a variety of committees and so no donations are required from fans! This trademark is only relevant to con committees, and so if you want to use the name in a fanzine article or similar, you don't need to worry.

On a similar note, Eastercon domains (a variety, including eastercon.org) are coming up for renewal in April 2012, according to Chris O'Shea - more news on that will presumably come up nearer to the time.

As the discussion got around to talking about bids for the session, nobody stepped forward to announce a bid for 2013. As a result, there was much banter and talk, including a suggestion that the next person through the door of the session would be the one to run the 2013 convention! However, I'm just absolutely positive that something will come up, so perhaps watching this space might be a good idea...

During the hubbub, a representative of the Satellite crew came forward to announce Satellite 4, which is a proposed bid for the Eastercon in 2014. Apparently more details will be announced at the closing ceremony on Monday, but it would be a safe bet to presume it will be in Glasgow...

Emma, the deputy chair for Olympus 2012, then spoke on the subject of next year's Eastercon. A contract has been signed with the Radisson Edwardian (home to Eastercon 2008 and 2010) in the last couple of weeks and room rates are the same as previous conventions. Signups for the convention are, as previously mentioned, just inside the fan lounge (look for the table with the laptops) and more information can be gleaned from www.olympus2012.org.

Overheard in the Cyberdrome Workshop

'Note the homage to Tolkien, us building two towers.'

News items in this issue were provided by: David Ulicsak, Nik, John Coxon, Sarah, Jim Mowatt, Dave Lally, Fran, Steve, Jim Mowatt, Flick, and Jan van't Ent.



OUR SARAH JANE

AN EASTERCON TRIBUTE TO ELISABETH SLADEN

Kethry-Ashira

With the sad news of Elisabeth Sladen's passing I'd like to hear anyone's and everyone's memories of her and her 'adventures', since I am of the new generation of *Dr Who* fans and would've liked to have known her better.

I was fortunate enough to meet her briefly last year at London Film and Comic Con where I was the apprentice photographer and she took the time to check with me if I had the shots that I wanted, even though she was very busy and short on time.

R.I.P. Elisabeth, thank you for being so kind to me.

Fran Dowd

We first got a TV at home in 1969, when I was 10, in the days when there were only three channels, and you watched what your Dad wanted, *Dr Who* was a family favourite. When Sarah Jane came along, she was the kind of woman teenage girls rarely saw on TV. Educated, articulate, a career woman, sassy, determined, intelligent, physically courageous. She didn't take shit from anyone, had her own agenda, and a strong code of behaviour. Elisabeth Sladen brought her to life perfectly and made her a role model for all of us.

**Anne
(gopher Dad)**

I always thought she was a really good role model for a young girl growing up at that time in the 1970s. She was an inspiring and well-rounded character.

She was an extremely strong woman with backbone. If she thought she was being treated poorly, she said something, she didn't keep quiet.

This was unlike Leela, who would stab everything, which was cool but not well-rounded.



Wilf James

Sarah Jane was honoured by many hundreds of SF fans of all ages after the showing of the newest episode of *Dr Who*. The fans indicated by their applause at the end of the BBC tribute programme that they all were saddened by the sudden loss of such a well-respected and loved *Dr Who* character.

Owen Dunn

Lis Sladen's Sarah Jane was in many ways the strongest manifestation of 'New Who'. She was not the screaming 'Who girl' of the 70s, but now a mature self-assured woman (and yet still preternaturally young!) who led and cared for an ensemble cast both on screen and off. If the young actors she worked with on *The Sarah Jane Adventures* continue their acting careers, I'm sure they will have a lot of memories of Lis, and a great deal to thank her for.

Dyllanne (Satellite 3)

When I was a lot younger I loved watching *Dr Who*. But what I remember about Sarah Jane was that she was a much stronger, more modern character than Jo, her predecessor, who seemed to do a lot more screaming. Sarah Jane was a much better role model for a young girl in those times than any other woman on television.

Sarah Jane and the Spiders from Mars (a crowd sourced title)

By Lilian Edwards, aged 42 ¾

'They used to say she was Sarah Jane Smith from Croydon – which annoyed me cos she had a Scouse accent. That's why she was meant to be dropped off in Croydon when she left the show, but it was really Aberdeen.'

I'm told this by Robert N in the Newsroom, to my great surprise, as we discuss our reaction to the *My Sarah Jane* item the BBC kindly supplied after the new *Dr Who* episode for communal watching at Eastercon. Three of us of varying ages have all admitted to crying. 'Except I stopped when they played that bloody theme music', adds Rob. I alone admit to liking *She*, but not the version they used, from the most schmaltzy film of all time namely *Love Actually*.

So why *are* we so affected? ('I'm not', says Rob, lying.) Jim reiterates the wisdom according to twitter, that we're mourning the loss of our childhood. Jim thinks the women are most affected because she was their first female role model, but my own experience is that it's the men mostly who keep telling this story. Are they really mourning their first feisty female role model, as Tony K claims, or are they remembering the first woman they, ahem, lusted after, as Rob helpfully suggests?

This isn't very valedictory, is it? Actually I was shocked to my skin when I heard Sarah was dead. One side effect of looking younger than conceivably possible for your age is that no one contemplated your death. As someone on twitter said, it was only last year that she was believable as a bride.

So why am I so upset about Sarah? Not because she was my first feminist working girl role model. I don't know who that was but it wasn't SJS – I always thought she was a bit posh, posher than me, even though I was a middle class doctor's daughter. I think I'm sad not because I've lost my past but because I know I'm losing my future. Like many of the women I came into fandom with, I'm rather unwillingly facing my middle aged years. For that, Sarah Jane really is a role model. *School Reunion* captured this perfectly.

Abandoned by the Doctor, missing out on her conventional prospects of marriage and children because she was distracted by lost opportunities, unattainable men and her career – that spoke to a lot of women and to, yes, me. But what did Sarah do? She went on fighting crime, she developed her own kid team, she got her own series. She even had a special goodbye from our favourite Doctor, David Tennant. What better saviour as we dread the perimenopausal years could there be?

So farewell Sarah Jane. I'm sure you're righting injustices somewhere. But please, not with a sonic lipstick!

Jim Mowatt

As I've roamed the Eastercon asking people about Lis Sladen I've encountered a variety of responses. Many talk of how they cried during the television tribute but the same people also felt they weren't really qualified to talk about Elisabeth Sladen and that possibly someone else should write about their feelings for her and for Sarah Jane Smith. They would tell me this and then go on to relate how much they were affected by the characters played by Lis Sladen. They would tell of their childhood and the fully rounded character of Sarah Jane Smith, who wasn't afraid to say when she felt something was wrong and was an inspiration to young women in particular who were living in a world where men would pat women on the knee and tell them not to worry their pretty little heads. It's a credit to her acting ability that she could take the character of a Doctor's companion and turn it into someone we could believe in as a real three-dimensional woman. Part of this the scriptwriters created, but another part, I believe, is her strength and inner goodness shining through. So many people who have worked with her have commented upon how helpful she was and how much she went out of her way to lend assistance, especially to those who were new to the show, whether it be *Doctor Who* or *The Sarah Jane Smith Adventures*. She seems to have been a really lovely person and it is little wonder there are so many of us who mourn the loss of Elisabeth Sladen.



David Wake: Elisabeth Sladen was a lovely person and coped with my strange outfits on two occasions, although slightly perturbed when I appeared in rags covered in smoke. Here I am as Jon Pertwee with her, Sarah Jane Smith. She even signed my door.



ILLUSTRIOUS NEWS NETWORK



April 25, 2011

62nd Annual British National Science Fiction Convention

Issue 7

2011 Hugo Award Nominees

Further details at: www.thehugoawards.org

Best Novel

Blackout/All Clear by Connie Willis; *Cryoburn* by Lois McMaster Bujold; *The Dervish House* by Ian McDonald; *Feed* by Mira Grant; *The Hundred Thousand Kingdoms* by N.K. Jemisin

Best Novella

'The Lady Who Plucked Red Flowers beneath the Queen's Window' by Rachel Swirsky; *The Lifecycle of Software Objects* by Ted Chiang; *'The Maiden Flight of McCauley's Bellerophon'* by Elizabeth Hand; *'The Sultan of the Clouds'* by Geoffrey A. Landis; *'Troika'* by Alastair Reynolds

Best Novelette

'Eight Miles' by Sean McMullen; *The Emperor of Mars'* by Allen M. Steele; *'The Jaguar House, in Shadow'* by Aliette de Bodard; *'Plus or Minus'* by James Patrick Kelly; *'That Leviathan, Whom Thou Hast Made'* by Eric James Stone

Best Short Story

'Amaryllis' by Carrie Vaughn; *'For Want of a Nail'* by Mary Robinette Kowal; *'Ponies'* by Kij Johnson; *'The Things'* by Peter Watts

Best Related Work

Bearings: Reviews 1997-2001, by Gary K. Wolfe; *The Business of Science Fiction: Two Insiders Discuss Writing and Publishing*, by Mike Resnick and Barry N. Malzberg; *Chicks Dig Time Lords: A Celebration of Doctor Who by the Women Who Love It*, edited by Lynne M. Thomas and Tara O'Shea; *Robert A. Heinlein: In Dialogue with His Century, Volume 1: (1907-1948): Learning Curve*, by William H. Patterson, Jr.; *Writing Excuses, Season 4*, by Brandon Sanderson, Jordan Sanderson, Howard Tayler, Dan Wells

Best Graphic Story

Fables: Witches, written by Bill Willingham, illustrated by Mark Buckingham; *Girl Genius, Volume 10: Agatha Heterodyne and the Guardian Muse*, by Phil and Kaja Foglio; *Grandville Mon Amour*, by Bryan Talbot; *Schlock Mercenary: Massively Parallel*, by Howard Tayler; *The Unwritten, Volume 2: Inside Man*, written by Mike Carey, illustrated by Peter Gross

Best Dramatic Presentation, Long Form

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1; *How to Train Your Dragon*; *Inception*; *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World*; *Toy Story 3*

Best Dramatic Presentation, Short Form

Doctor Who: 'A Christmas Carol'; *Doctor Who: 'The Pandorica Opens/The Big Bang'*; *Doctor Who: 'Vincent and the Doctor'*; *F**k Me*, Ray Bradbury; *The Lost Thing*

Best Editor, Short Form

John Joseph Adams, Stanley Schmidt, Jonathan Strahan, Gordon Van Gelder and Sheila Williams

Best Editor, Long Form

Lou Anders, Ginjer Buchanan, Moshe Feder, Liz Gorinsky, Nick Mamatas, Beth Meacham and Juliet Ulman

Best Professional Artist

Daniel Dos Santos, Bob Eggleton, Stephan Martiniere, John Picacio and Shaun Tan

Best Semiprozine

Clarkesworld, edited by Neil Clarke, Cheryl Morgan, Sean Wallace; podcast directed by Kate Baker; *Interzone*, edited by Andy Cox; *Lightspeed*, edited by John Joseph Adams; *Locus*, edited by Liza Groen Trombi and Kirsten Gong-Wong; *Weird Tales*, edited by Ann VanderMeer and Stephen H. Segal

Best Fanzine

Banana Wings, edited by Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer; *Challenger*, edited by Guy H. Lillian III; *The Drink Tank*, edited by Christopher J Garcia and James Bacon; *File 770*, edited by Mike Glyer; *StarShipSofa*, edited by Tony C. Smith

Best Fan Writer

James Bacon, Claire Brialey, Christopher J Garcia, James Nicoll and Steven H Silver

Best Fan Artist

Brad W. Foster, Randall Munroe, Maurine Starkey, Steve Stiles and Taral Wayne

John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer

Award for the best new professional science fiction or fantasy writer of 2009 or 2010, sponsored by Dell Magazines (not a Hugo Award).

Saladin Ahmed, Lauren Beukes, Larry Correia, Lev Grossman and Dan Wells

Elisabeth Sladen celebration

A celebration has been arranged to commemorate the life of Elisabeth Sladen. This will be 6.00pm MONDAY in the Gladstone room.

Please check you bill

When checking out of the hotel, please check you bill carefully to make sure that the charges are correct, particularly that you have been charged for parking at the con rate of £3 per day.

Following our Guests of Honour

If you haven't been able to track down our Guests of Honour yet, here's a list of last opportunities:

Roz Kaveney will be at the Gender & Race in SF and Pop Culture panel in the London room at 10.30am. **Vince Docherty's** GoH interview is in the London room at 12 noon. **David Hardy's** GoH Interview in the Earls room at 1.30pm. **David Weber** will be at his Kaffeeklatsch in the Boadroom at 1.30pm, and at the Space Opera panel in the Queens room at 3.00pm.

Our Guests of Honour will also appear at the Closing Ceremony in the Queens room at 4.30pm.

Signing session 3 author list

The third signing session will be today (Monday) at 12 noon in the Fan Lounge. The following authors will be at the session: Marion Pitman, John Meaney, Jonny Nexus, Kari Sperring, Sophia McDougal, Stan Nicholls, David Weber, Lucsan, Aliette de Bodard, and more...

Fans are requested to have mercy on our hardworking authors and limit themselves to a maximum of two books per author per fan.

Found items

Two Peter Morwood novels in a Forbidden Planet bag have been found near Liz Williams' stall in the dealers' room. They don't appear to be in Ops, so if they are yours please have a look in the dealers' room.

Programme Changes

New item: Elisabeth Sladen / Sarah Jane Smith Celebration 6.00pm MONDAY in the Gladstone room.
Item cancelled: Evolution of Fandom

The Admiralty Ball of Lady Nik and Sir Vincent started with the entrance of Queen Victoria, followed by more dignitaries under the watchful cameras of our con photographers and even a gatecrashing Sparrow. Alas an unfortunate communication error resulted in us not being able to supply you with a full report and proper attribution of all pictures, but here's a showy page to give you some impression of the relaxed atmosphere in the Queens room.



There was general merriment, and dignified dancing under the direction of a fine band.



News items in this issue were provided by: David Haddock, Fran Dowd, and Jan van't Ent. Admiralty Ball photos provided by Jaap Boekestein, Jan van't Ent, DC, Richard and Zoe.



ILLUSTRIOUS NEWS NETWORK



April 25, 2011

62nd Annual British National Science Fiction Convention

Issue 8

Saving Doctor Who

The nights before the con were filled with anxiety dreams about rebellious tech, but this is par for the course prior to a convention.

For the showing of *Doctor Who* we bought a Freeview box and tested it thoroughly both at home and at the con. It was tested again on Saturday morning and then at 5.30pm on Saturday night in the programme room. Then the screen and projector were moved, and the box agreed to give us sound but there was no picture. People were outside queuing and the whole hotel seemed full of anticipatory buzz. We went into overdrive trying to figure out what was wrong. Anything we had duplicates of was swapped in and out and in again, but nothing seemed to make any difference. Eventually we figured out that the only thing it could be was that the box itself was playing up. We even took that apart to try and find the problem, but there was nothing we could do. The pressure increased as the doors opened and 600 people poured into the room. We imagined them turning into crazed berserkers and tearing us limb from limb.

We called Nik, we called hotel liaison, and then people from the hotel got involved. At the last moment a little bit of magic was performed and fate threw 3 sixes all at once. The screen sprang into life about 15 seconds before the beginning of *Doctor Who* and we all relaxed, a little. We couldn't relax much though, as we didn't know whether we'd be able to change channels at the end to catch the Sarah Jane Smith special. We crossed our fingers and trembled for 45 minutes, however it worked and we breathed again.

Rumour has it that the box will be available to be abused at the closing ceremony or dead dog party.

The beer mountain

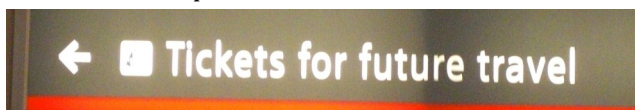
If the beer won't go to the dead dog party, the dead dog party will go to the beer.

The dead dog party will be in the Fan Lounge from 7.30pm till midnight (ish).

Race for Life

ZoeP informs us that she's going to take part in the Race for Life in May this year. If anyone would like to sponsor her, head to the following address:

<http://raceforlifesporsorme.com/zoeparsons3011>
or accost her in person.



It appears that the N.E.C. train station is more advanced than first thought!

TAFF online voting

You can cast your vote for TAFF at the Cold Tonnage table in the dealers' room, by contacting Claire Brialey, and via PayPal. The PayPal account to use is stevegreen@livejournal.com and the minimum donation is £2. You have until midnight on Tuesday the 26th of April to vote for your favourite candidate.

Olympus 2012 progress reports

Olympus 2012 (Eastercon 2012) have paper copies of their progress report in the **Fan Bar** near the door. They're also taking signups. The prices are being held at the current rate till June.

LARP update

Firefly LARP report from the assassin: when he left the scene all four targets were down and out pending medical help—they got lucky—the assassin was a little unhappy about this.

Found items

The following items have been found around the convention (in the style of the *Generation Game*): a fleece (come reclaim it back before the Argonauts get it), a pendant, and a bracelet.

Please come along to Ops (in the Lancaster room) if you wish to claim any of this stuff.

Al Davison signing

Al Davison, artist on Hugo nominated *The Unwritten*, will be signing copies of his issue and has original art to view and for sale at the Astral Gypsy stall in the dealers' room.

European fandom info. wanted

Ecki (from Germany) would like to collect information about SF fandom in other European countries. Fans in Germany have nearly no information about other fandoms, and he would like to remedy this situation, possibly by producing a fanzine, possibly by arranging a panel at a future convention. Would interested fans please visit Ecki at his table (German Fandom) in the fan lounge, or e-mail him at ecki@magic.ms.

Younger fan found!

Michelle would like to point out that she was conceived at a convention, which might make her the youngest fan at a convention ever!

Programme Changes

Room change: Dead Dog Party

This item has moved to the Fan Lounge & Bar



Phlosque—where is it?

Last seen drifting on a solitary ice floe towards the Azores, the popular annual award for the finest cute fantasy artwork with significance of the year has not been heard of this Eastercon.

Speculation varies between abduction by quaintly pirate-themed seagoing mammals, being forcibly detained upon an ecologically unfeasible desert island as part of a pink-themed cargo cult, to the inevitable conspiracy theory that the Phlosque has been displaced from its niche in Popular Culture by the more predacious Royal Wedding Souvenir.

Anyone spotting the Phlosque is asked not to approach it as it is too sickly sweet and deep, but to contact the relevant authorities, Eira and Smuzz who are equipped to deal with these things.

Tales From The Asylum

As a special thank you to all those who have been working hard this weekend, *Tales from the Asylum* will be available today for a special reduced price of 8 groats. The cash price remains unchanged. *Tales from the Asylum* is available in the dealers' room, next to the steampunk exhibits.

Just a Minute review

John Coxon was sitting with DougS in the front row of the Just a Minute panel at 10.30am, on which Donna Scott, Paul Cornell and John Dowd were tasked by Nik Whitehead to talk for a minute without hesitation, repetition or deviation on a variety of subjects, one of which was the newsletter! Donna started by saying that the newsletter provided information vital to every congoer's life, and was challenged by Paul Cornell on the basis that it wasn't! In a fit of loyalty to the newsletter team, Mr Coxon protested and Nik overturned the challenge—good chairing indeed!

At the end of the panel, John Dowd (the reigning champion) took a sharp first place. Donna Scott came in a very worthwhile second, and Paul Cornell in an extremely strong third position. If you'd like more details about the panel, on which James Bacon managed three points despite not being in the room, you could do worse than read the #eastercon hashtag or check out @sguod's tweets.

Who would marry this man?

In a surprise announcement, Jersey heartthrob and former TAFF winner Tobes Valois has revealed that he is engaged to Australian fan Beverly Hope. The last of the Merovingians will also leave his ancestral homeland for warmer Antipodian climes.

Jim De Liscard, in a desperate attempt to keep Tobes in the country, last night proposed marriage to him and was accepted. It remains to be seen whether either of them remember that today.

Empire of Earth

Marcus Rowland popped into the newsroom to pass on a URL for the talk he did here at Eastercon on Saturday.

<http://ffutures.livejournal.com/789400.html>

Overheard at the convention

'The Eastercon play was a life-changing experience'

Shabar High Class Balti Restaurant

4 Arden Oak Rd, Sheldon, Birmingham B26 3LX

We thought it was good value and the food was just...

And if you think you can eat a balti all to yourself then don't order any side dishes. You will quickly find yourself overwhelmed by the sheer volume of food. It's about a 5 minute drive to the restaurant from this hotel. It comes recommended by Peter and Emma Rendle, who had a delightful meal and felt they were well looked after despite being accompanied by their ultra destructive kids.

Telephone number for this restaurant is 0121 742 0636 and it's open from 5.30pm until midnight.

This restaurant has also been heartily recommended by Red, HelenX and Duncan.

Nature notes

The bluebells in the spinney between the Metropole and the N.E.C. are now in full bloom and well worth a look, especially in dappled sunlight.

Overheard in the Art Show

(adult to small child)

'No, you've bought a skull already, haven't you.'

So Long, and Thanks for All the Articles!

A big thank you to all of the newsletter team, who have worked hard this weekend to produce the *Illustrious News Network* for your reading pleasure.

Thanks Jan, Jim, DaveH, Dave U, and John.

Thank you to the con photographers for capturing the spirit of the weekend so beautifully.

Thanks ZoeP, Jaap, DaveC, and Jim.

The Unsilent Library

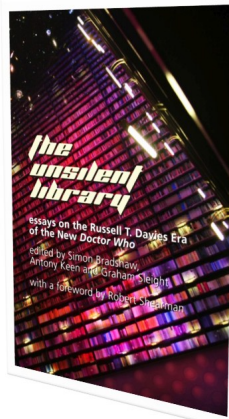
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News items in this issue were provided by: Crazyscot, ZoeP, DaveH, Steve Green, Gaspode, Ops, Astral Gypsy, Ecki, Michelle, SMS, Tales from the Asylum, John Coxon, David Ulicsac, Jim Mowatt, Marcus Rowland, ½r, Red, HelenX and Duncan.